GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5873
ANSWERED ON:31.08.2001
MID TERM APPRAISAL OF NINTH FIVE YEAR PLAN
BALIRAM

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mid-term appraisal of the Ninth Five Year Plan reveals that the people living below the poverty line in Uttar Pradesh are not able to avail of the benefits of Public Distribution System so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for failure of the PDS in the State;

(d) whether the Union Government have taken any corrective steps in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHAUHAN)

(a), (b)&(c): Planning Commission in the Mid-Term appraisal of the 9th Five Year Plan has cited a study conducted in Uttar Pradesh (March,2000) which concluded that TPDS has not helped the poor in the State. The main causes pointed in the study are:

1. U.P. Government does not lift its quota due to bad administrative arrangements.

2. A substantial portion of whatever is lifted is often sold in the black market.

3. Imperfect targeting has led to exclusion of eligible households.

4. The basis of selecting beneficiaries lacks transparency and is too complicated for local officials to administer.

5. There is a lack of political commitment and the FPS does not have adequate incentive.

6. Multiplicity of agencies, poor co-ordination and low administrative accountability have crippled the delivery machinery.

(d)&(e): Public Distribution System (PDS) is operatedunder the joint responsibility of Government of India and the State Governments/UT Administrations. While the Central Government is responsible for procurement, storage and transportation ofthe PDS commoditiesupto the designated depots, identification of BPL population, issue of ration cards and distribution of subsidised foodgrains to the cardholders in a transparent and accountable manner through the FPS rests with the State Governments.

In a meeting held in Lucknow on 31.8.2000 with Members of Parliament, State FoodMinisters and State government officials to

review the implementation of TPDS in Uttar Pradesh, the issues relating to implementation of PDS including BPL population identified by the State Government, bogus ration cards, allocation and offtake of foodgrains and status of TPDS monitoring, were discussed.

All State Governments have been requested to intiate suitable measures at all levels to formulate and implement foolproof arrangements for identification of the poor, for delivery of foodgrains to fair price shops (FPS) and for its distribution in a transparent and accountable manner at the FPS level with the active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) as a measure of social audit. In order to efficiently reach the essential commodities under PDS to the consumers, a Model Citizens Charter for Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) has also been drawn up and circulated to States/UTs for adoption. The charter contains essential information regarding FPS, procedure of issue of ration cards, inspections and checking, right to information and vigilance and public participation. Government Uttar Pradesh has adopted the citizens` charter.

In order to make the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) more focused and targeted towards the poorest of the poor, the Prime Minister announced the `Antyodaya Anna Yojana` on 25 December 2000. The Yojana contemplates identification of poorest of the poor families amongst BPL families and issue of 25 kg of foodgrains at highly subsidised prices of Rs.2 per kg for wheat and Rs.3 per kg for rice to them. Antyodaya Anna Yojana has been implemented in the State of Uttar Pradesh with effect from July 2001 after the completion of the task of identification of Antyodaya families and issue of distinctive ration cards to the beneficiaries.